

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Prior to further substantive examination, please amend the claims as follows. The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

1-20. (Cancelled)

21. (Currently Amended) An isolated polynucleotide molecule comprising a DNA sequence encoding an infectious RNA molecule encoding a United States strain PRRS virus, said infectious RNA molecule produced by a method comprising the steps of transfecting a host cell that is not susceptible to infection by wild-type PRRS virus with a nucleic acid sequence derived from the genome of said United States strain of PRRS virus and , and said sequence being at least 15 kb in length and rescuing infectious progeny virus from said host cell by passage or cocultivation of said host cell with cells that are susceptible to said virus.

22. (Previously Presented) An isolated polynucleotide molecule of claim 21, wherein said DNA sequence encoding an infectious RNA molecule encodes a PRRS virus deposited under ATCC Accession No. VR 2332, and said sequence is at least 15 kb in length.

23. (Currently Amended) A co-culture of cells for the production of an infectious RNA molecule comprising a) a culture of cells that are not susceptible to infection by PRRSV wherein the cells are transfected ~~cell comprising~~ with a DNA sequence of at least 15kb in length encoding an infectious RNA molecule encoding a PRRS virus deposited under ATCC Accession No. VR 2332, which transfected cell is capable of expressing the encoded PRRS virus, said infectious RNA molecule being produced by a host cell that is not susceptible to infection by wild-type PRRS virus and b) a co-cultured with a culture of cells that are susceptible to infection by said virus, ~~and said DNA sequence being at least 15kb in length.~~

24. (Previously Presented) An isolated polynucleotide molecule of claim 22, wherein said isolated polynucleotide is in the form of a plasmid.

25. (Currently Amended) An isolated infectious RNA molecule encoded by an isolated polynucleotide molecule, which infectious RNA molecule encodes a PRRS virus deposited under ATCC Accession No. VR 2332, said infectious RNA molecule being produced by a method comprising the step of transfecting a host cell that is not susceptible to infection by wild-type PRRS virus with a nucleic acid sequence of at least 15 kb in length from said derived from the genome of said United States strain of PRRS virus deposited under ATCC Accession No. VR 2332 and rescuing infectious RNA produced by said host cell by passage or cocultivation of said host cell with cells that are susceptible to said PRRS virus.

26. (Currently Amended) A recombinant PRRS virus encoded by an isolated polynucleotide molecule having a length of at least 15 kb and comprising a DNA sequence encoding an infectious RNA molecule encoding a PRRS virus deposited under ATCC Accession No. VR 2332, said infectious RNA molecule being produced according to a method in which by a host cell that is not susceptible to infection by wild-type PRRS virus is transfected with at least a 15 kb nucleic acid sequence derived from the genome of said PRRS virus deposited under ATCC Accession No. VR 2332, and rescuing said recombinant PRRS virus from said host cell by passage or cocultivation of said host cell with cells that are susceptible to infection by PRRS virus deposited under ATCC Accession No. VR 2332.

27. (Withdrawn) An isolated polynucleotide molecule comprising a DNA sequence encoding an infectious RNA molecule encoding a PRRS virus wherein said PRRS virus comprises ORF7 protein of ATCC VR 2332.

28. (Previously Presented) The isolated polynucleotide of claim 21 wherein said host cells that are not susceptible for infection by wild-type PRRS virus are BHK21 cells.

29. (Previously Presented) The isolated polynucleotide of claim 21 wherein said cells that are susceptible to PRRS virus infection are porcine alveolar macrophage cells.

30. (Previously Presented) The isolated polynucleotide of claim 21 wherein said cells that are susceptible to PRRS virus infection are monkey kidney cell line MA104 cells.

31. (Previously Presented) The isolated polynucleotide of claim 21 wherein said cells that are susceptible to PRRS virus infection are CL2621 cells.

32. (Previously Presented) The isolated polynucleotide of claim 21 wherein the utmost 5' end of the viral genome comprises a 10 nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:19.